

SUCH IS MILITARY:  
DR. GEORGE MARTIN TROWBRIDGE'S  
LETTERS FROM  
SHERMAN'S ARMY, 1863-1865

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**G**EORGE Martin Trowbridge, M.D., was an Assistant Surgeon with the 19th Michigan Volunteer Infantry from when he joined the regiment in winter quarters in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in October 1863 until the regiment disbanded in Detroit, June 24th, 1865.<sup>1</sup>

During that period Trowbridge wrote to his wife in Michigan almost every day and sometimes several times a day. He intended his letters to be a diary. His 191 letters, comprising 1,089 pages, are in the Clements Library of the University of Michigan, and are the basis of this essay.<sup>2</sup> Trowbridge's handwriting was clear, and his spelling, except for an occasional slip such as too few t's in Chattanooga, was good. Such errors are silently corrected. Trowbridge was a hasty and careless penman, however, and it is difficult to decide what words he intended to capitalize and how he meant to punctuate his sentences. His eccentricities are preserved when he is quoted.

#### TROWBRIDGE'S EDUCATION

Trowbridge completed the classical course at Kalamazoo College, Michigan, in 1859.<sup>3</sup> He had studied Latin and Greek, the English language and literature, rhetoric, logic, some mathematics and natural sciences and in particular moral philosophy, including evidences of Christianity. At college he became a fervent Baptist. When he went into military service he forgot to take his Greek Testament with him, and he asked his wife to send it to him. On December 8, 1863 he told his wife that he was translating Homer "to drive away monotony," and he compared the Trojan war with the current one. On the march he collected books, telling his wife that "you need not be to any great trouble to furnish me with reading matter as we confiscate books on our raid which will serve to break the monotony of camp life." When he was in South Carolina he had a two-volume edition of Horace, one volume in Latin and the other in English. He sent it to his wife, saying that

it would be useful as a trot for their as-yet-unborn oldest son when he was in college. In the midst of marches and battles Trowbridge collected flowers, seeds, and insects to send to his wife for his collections at home. He regretted that he did not have a good botany text with him.

#### TROWBRIDGE'S RELIGION

An evangelical Christian, Trowbridge regularly attended prayer meetings in his regiment, and appears to have acted as chaplain in the absence of a regular one.<sup>4</sup> Eventually the regiment elected a chaplain who had served three years in the cavalry but had left because "Piles troubling him." In the meantime, several people applied, but Trowbridge didn't think them up to the job. In any event, he would not approve of a Methodist. He had a poor opinion of army chaplains: "They are an unprofitable investment for the government; better add to the Medical Staff. Not but that good chaplain might do much good while poor one will accomplish little for the glory of god."

#### TROWBRIDGE'S MEDICAL TRAINING

Trowbridge was graduated from the Department of Medicine and Surgery of the University of Michigan in 1862. At that time the medical course consisted of a series of lectures enlivened by an occasional demonstration, and students were expected to sit through them during two successive years.<sup>5</sup> At graduation each student presented a thesis much like a term paper. Trowbridge began his thesis, *The Philosophy of the Circulation*, with a quotation from Cicero: "*spiritus ex pulmone in cor recipitur et per arterias distributer, sanguis per venias*," but he said that Harvey had proved that blood circulates in both arteries and veins. His thesis, like most others, was cribbed from a textbook, in his case John William Draper's preposterous *Human Physiology*.<sup>6</sup> A nominal graduation requirement was that a student be apprenticed for three years to a "respectable physician," but a requirement not rigorously enforced. After graduation Trowbridge went into practice in Centerville, a village in the southwest corner of Michigan, in association with Dr. John Bennitt,<sup>7</sup> who had graduated from the Cleveland Medical College in 1850, and was therefore a more experienced physician than Trowbridge. After the war, Trowbridge returned to Centerville to practice until his death on February 7, 1885.<sup>8</sup>

Trowbridge was always anxious to improve his knowledge, and often said that a particular medical duty gave him an opportunity to learn. He subscribed to the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, and instructed his wife to



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forward or not to forward the journal, depending on the military situation. Once he asked her to send him the table of contents so that he could decide whether it was worth while to send that issue. On October 22, 1863 he wrote from winter quarters in McMinnville, Tennessee: "Spend my unoccupied time reading & desiring to make the most of a necessary evil. We are spending part of each day studying *Virchow's Cellular Pathology*, a fine book it is." When he had finished reading Virchow on November 20 he was "much pleased with the work as seems based upon facts & not theory it will do to read more than once. We are quite destitute of reading matter." A little later he decided to study German so he could read scientific and classical works.

## Winter Quarters

### A SURGEON'S DUTIES

When Trowbridge joined the 19th Michigan Volunteer Infantry in winter quarters as an assistant surgeon, Dr. John Bennitt was already a surgeon in the same regiment. Because Bennitt was often at the division hospital or on leave, Trowbridge performed a surgeon's duties as well. Those duties were described by the Medical Director of the Army.<sup>9</sup>

First in the day was morning sick call. Because the Surgeon "really regulates the strength of the command," he was cautioned that many soldiers played sick to avoid service and that "he is required to discover and overcome the means brought into requisition by the skulker's ingenuity."

The surgeon was required to examine conscripts, substitutes, or recruits carefully to accept only those fit for service. Trowbridge's only account of that was on November 9, 1863, when he examined 15 negro volunteers who "were somewhat intelligent appearing men; all a mixture but several had European features." The surgeon was also required to inspect the camp daily to see that it was adequately drained and filth was removed. Trowbridge said "We intend to be No. 1 in our sanitary arrangements." On November 23, 1863:

[t]his AM we Drs. of the 19th and 23rd visited the companies stationed around the village, had fine ride & became acquainted with the Asst. Surg. of 23rd Mo. Reg. V.I.—Found our troops in very good sanitary conditions; some you know are constitutionally filthy such will not keep clean unless compelled to. Having so few sick we have much more time to look after the sanitary conditions of the camp.

Everything the surgeon or assistant surgeon did was to be followed by a report to the adjutant, the commanding officer, or the brigade surgeon.

Trowbridge sent his wife abstracts of seven of his monthly reports. That for November 1863 was

	Mean Strength of Command		
	Present	Absent	Total
Officers	28	8	34
Enlisted men	539	98	637
Aggregate	567	104	681
	In hospital		1
	Sick in quarters		2
	On light duty		4

Thirteen had been taken sick in the month; five had received slight injuries; and sixteen had been returned to duty. The chief problems had been sore eyes and chills and fever.

1,206 men had enrolled in the 19th Michigan.<sup>10</sup> Trowbridge's figure of 681 shows the attrition the regiment had already suffered, and his monthly report for January 1865 gave a mean strength of only 356.

The official list of duties concluded: "Of the relative position of an Assistant Surgeon very little is to be said. He seems to be subject to the orders of the commander of the regiment, brigade, etc., whether he be colonel or corporal, and to those of the Surgeon of his regiment, brigade, division, etc., and has command only over those of inferior rank in his own department."<sup>11</sup>

In addition, an assistant surgeon's pay, on the rare occasions when he was paid, was only that of a lieutenant. Trowbridge was galled by his inferior position. A month after he joined the regiment he wrote: "Lebbie, what think you of my trying for a position as Surgeon of a colored Reg.; you know I worship the colored so it would harmonize with my finer *Phelins*." On December 5, 1863 Trowbridge was ordered to Chattanooga to take the examination for Surgeonship in a colored regiment. Two days later he wrote: "Tomorrow send letter to front asking what steps to take to enter regiment of colored troops; shall wait with some interest to hear for am ambitious to rise in scale of honor & emolument." In February he told his wife:

I flourish under military duty however am bored some days by the unbleached who seem to think it a matter of course that the little Doctor is at their command.<sup>12</sup> I have really done more in the way of looking after them than should if I had not considered entering a regt. of color. Want to see how should like the practice of medicine among those of color & must say deliver me from the pleasures of the colored department a little too rank for your Dr. If enter reg of color will be only for the increase of pay at sacrifice of much other enjoyment.

Trowbridge said nothing more on the subject after his white regiment began to move, and he was never promoted.

#### PRESCRIBING

Army regulations ordered the assistant surgeon to visit the sick in quarters and to prescribe for them. Trowbridge saw this as an opportunity to learn, for he wrote: "So far as I am concerned each day feel more & more satisfaction in action of remedies; can calculate with more certainty the change from day to day of those under treatment. Can behold the powers of life fail with stoic indifference."

Aside from an occasional remark that "Quinine call has sounded which must be attended by Drs. as by men," Trowbridge said little about what he

prescribed for the troops. Once he said prescribing for 70 men was a fair morning's work, and when he was near Atlanta in July 1864 he said: "Several cases of bilious trouble none very serious & most yield to mercurial followed by quinine. Inflamed eyes are about worst cases." When he gave "mercurial," doubtless calomel, he was disregarding Surgeon General Hammond's order not to use the drug. Trowbridge himself was skeptical of the use of other forms of mercury. He told his wife about an officer who was only slightly ailing but who, because he wanted to resign, reported to the hospital. He "fell into the hands of an *olá fogey* I think who is prodigal of mercurials & has in this case produced ptyalism. Enough for others to say if an officer is not sick enough to get a certificate of discharge at Hosp. will make him good in that deficiency." The next month he said that to guard against what he usually called "cephalgia," he had taken morphine and had remained semiconscious, neither sleeping nor waking.

On September 28, 1864 Trowbridge said he had been kept awake last night by a very interesting case from a medical point of view. During the evening he had been called to prescribe for a patient with diarrhea and severe headache. He had prescribed one ounce of whiskey, one dram of tincture of opium and one dram of tincture of veratrum. The diarrhea was checked, but

headache continued when perhaps 11 P.M. a dose of V.V. 20 drops presume was given. the preparation not having been tested as to strength in 30 minutes no effect the dose was repeated with an increase, clean not put in water. in 30 min. no appreciable effects patient soldier lay down 20-30 min when suddenly commotion began in stomach. sense of cramping and retching with fall of pulse from 140 to 20 & almost imperceptible. cold sweat over whole surface with incessant vomiting & what seemed singular complete loss of power to articulate not even say water: Such was condition of things! in dark no water. The cause of the trouble of course was known & mind as clear & active as ever. wants & directions were speedily written out on paper. Whiskey water sling with emplastrum cantharides to stomach rubbing surface with dry cloths & bathing head in whiskey. after siege of 2 hours or so storm began to quiet vomiting cease & after few swallows of tea had crampings of stomach and esophagus which made swallowing very difficult quieted off very much like a case of globus hystericus; rising into the throat & mouth. Patient fell into short nap of hour or so & awake with power of speech. He simply feeling exhausted from the excessive vomiting & prolonged action of the V.V. Such is a hasty report of the case which is of much interest to me in the therapeutic point of view proving the accumulated effect of V.V. on the stomach before effecting (sic) the circulation & the rapidity with which extended to the lungs & organs of speech. Proof of nervous connection between lungs &c & stomach. The case proves also the course to be pursued in treating overdose of V. V. stimulants &c the morphine not given from its unpleasant effects. The patient happened to be your Dr. so presume you will be somewhat interested: the great incon-

venience this evening is the fine blistering over Stomach to prevent any inflammation of stomach from excessive vomiting.

### COOKING

The regimental surgeon was ordered to see that food was of good quality, of sufficient quantity, and judiciously cooked. As to quantity, Trowbridge told his wife:

Soldiers rations are specified amount for each man per day viz. Pork or Bacon 12 oz. Beef or Mutton 20 oz. Flour or Bread 22 oz. Beans 0.64 gills, Rice & Coffee 1.6 oz. Tea 0.24 oz. Sugar 2.4 oz. Vinegar 0.32 gills, Spermin candles 1.6 oz. soap 0.64 oz. Salt 0.16 gills, Potatoes 1 lb. twice week if have them. Mixed vegetables 1 oz. Soldiers usually draw for several days in companies so small fractions done away with. You see no man ought to suffer on full rations. Soldiers by being economical can save enough to purchase all the extras they may want; so as to live from the top shelf. Uncle Sam feeds his boys.

However, Trowbridge said a vegetable diet would do good, and longed for one of his wife's vegetable stews.

Quality was another matter. Trowbridge complained of

this everlasting frying the great bane of food preparing spoiling every which thus prepared. We have concluded to labor in a hygienic point, believing if we secure good general & individual police, good cooking, cleanliness &c. becoming military prophylactics it will be more profitable for Government to keep us as such than if by neglecting such items have many sick to look after. Hitherto it has been the custom to put a soldier to cooking who was good for nothing anywhere else & certainly worse than nothing as a cook.

Trowbridge and Bennitt had "a project on foot now to improve our cooking. Hoping thereby to stimulate all those employed as cooks to do their work well, to excell, calculating if the food properly prepared one class of disease so ill become well nigh extinct; which will be quite an item." Prizes of \$15, \$10, and \$5 were offered to the best cooks, and on January 12, 1864 Trowbridge wrote that they "divided prizes Cos. C. & D.: \$12½ each Co H third prize, Co F the lowest." They continued the prizes for the next two months in winter quarters.

### HOSPITAL DUTIES

While still in McMinnville, Trowbridge wrote that he was now obeying new orders for a change in the medical department. Regimental hospitals were to be abolished, and all sick and wounded were to be sent immediately to brigade or division hospitals. Trowbridge often served in a division hospital himself, but he never liked the arrangement. It took the wounded away from surgeons of their own regiment, and "strange as it may seem even some

of the Surgeons make a distinction of Brig. not even caring for a wounded man unless in their Brig. &c. tis a shame though true what selfishness & laziness we do see in the service of our government." Trowbridge never made that distinction, and several times recorded that after finished in his own hospital he volunteered to help in another. But after a particularly busy time operating he wrote: "there is very little pleasure in performing an important difficult operation when conscious the patient will soon be off & never perhaps heard of again & without history known, but such is military."

Trowbridge wrote from McMinnville: "I have charge of the sick of the whole concern and have concluded to tend both regiments & Gen. Hosp. if other Surgeons will go home & then only half employed. Only objection I have at serving at present post is to tacitly conniving with surgeon in charge at doing work he ought to do, permitting him to remain in worse than idleness, but such is military." At another time Trowbridge made it clear that "worse than idleness" was being drunk.

Thereafter Trowbridge regularly described his hospital duties. Almost every day he wrote that his patients were improving, but some were about to die. An example is "Patients improving, even some had marked for Black Death bid fair to recover which I fear will reflect on the Little Doctor as when say a thing like to have it prove so."

There was minor surgery: "a colored boy playing with a gun shot rammer through his hand contusing the 4th metacarpal bone. Operation not advised. simple water dressing applied." A recruit fell down stairs and fractured his jaw. Another broke his leg falling off a roof. Trowbridge could report: "Hanks, the man with the broken leg, accident some four weeks ago, was on crutches today—good length if no evil befall twill be as good a leg as before, a little satisfaction as had entire charge of Hosp. Patients." Hanks survived to be promoted corporal on January 1, 1865.

There was major surgery as well: "P.M. present and aided in amputating thigh of Wm. Harvey at Gen. Hosp. case very interesting showing limb & perhaps life have been sacrificed upon the altar of ignorance or carelessness. The same has been done I urged a month ago. One month suffering & great reduction in chances of recovery have been added to patient because Surg. in charge is *worse than nobody*." Mortality from amputation of the thigh was 54.2%,<sup>13</sup> but William Harvey was mustered out June 10, 1865. Other soldiers were less fortunate. "One happy dispositioned young man I have no hope of his recovery & from sense of duty had to tell him I thought his case will terminate fatally. He seemed surprised as felt well & suffered but little. It was rather unpleasant information to give." Occasionally, when



a patient died Trowbridge commented that he feared the man had not been well prepared for the after life. When he said two patients were about to die he added: "I try to appear cheerful always & have so well succeeded as to hear others remark the little Doctor is always happy."

Trowbridge wrote little about medical problems in winter quarters except measles and smallpox. He said that one soldier was about to die of tuberculosis and that another had died of "typho-pneumonia." That "soldier boy was sick several weeks a mere skeleton so emaciated was conscious and clear to the last yet hardly thought was going to leave earth." On February 2, 1864 Trowbridge wrote: "Wind howls few flakes of snow flit by very spitefully quite a change since Nov. when all was clear and warm. No wonder Pneumonia flourishes in this country such a change in weather. Several severe cases should not be surprised if opportunity for autopsy presented in a few days." There was also typhoid fever despite Trowbridge's boast about sanitary conditions: "This PM Jno Sutton from Centerville was called to the silent city entered Hosp. on the 9th and died 10th peritonitis from perforation of intestine by ulceration allowing contents of bowel to escape into peritoneal cavity; so falls the soldier, death in the small hours, in pestilence more frequent than in battle." More than a month later he wrote: "Mrs. Sutton is very anxious to have body of her son sent home. Strange that anyone should be so foolish. If I fall in Dixie let me lie undisturbed till day of resurrection." Later still he said he had just embalmed the body of an officer to be sent home.

Trowbridge performed autopsies on soldiers: "The soldier Anderson has gone & an autopsy showed extensive encephalitis. Sic transit gloria Michiganensis." He performed autopsies on civilians as well. On April 7, 1864 he wrote: "Dorcas colored woman employed as washer &c died this PM having been sick but a few days as have not examined the body am not quite certain as to its cause. She lost her little girl a few weeks ago." The next day he reported:

cause peritonitis arising from ovaritis with abscess in broad ligament & left side near uterus what gave rise to ovarian trouble am not able to say. Should not be surprised if it was partially indulgences common to colored women among whom virtue is an empty sound. Am satisfied it was not in power of remedies to relieve the trouble & think have learned a useful lesson that should not forget which is to give all who complain a careful examination as there may be grave trouble whose symptoms are not very severe.

A week later, "Patients improving except one noble young man of 59 O.V.I. a medic my zeal I fear had caused his dissolution heartily he entered into scientific pursuits & seems to have been poisoned result of Post Mort &c.

Your Dr. was the one most exposed but no sores on hands yet as this is a warning word timely spoken."

#### CIVILIAN PRACTICE: BUSHWHACKERS

Almost as soon as he arrived in winter quarters Trowbridge had some civilian practice. On November 4, 1863 he wrote: "Yesterday evening a Tennessee man shot a Kentuckian. Trouble arose about a horse. The ball entered in front below the heart and came out near the backbone injuring I think one kidney." On April 3, 1864 Trowbridge wrote: "Have 2 patients in the Hosp. one an honest man zealous in good deeds, wounded soon to die by a bushwhacker. the other sent from Guard House a bushwhacker soon able to be discharged from Hosp. & presume sent home because a boy the main help of a widowed mother; if guilty as charged ought to be hanged as warning that boys could not bushwhack with impunity." A bushwhacker was a Southern guerrilla. Another had not been so fortunate, for Trowbridge had written on March 4:

Yesterday a *Bushwhacker* was brought in had been shot some five weeks ago by one of Stokes Cavalry. I think & hope the wounds may prove fatal. gave him a moral lecture on the baseness of *bushwhacking*, assuring him hanging would be too good for them. Removed one ball from his back & he says there is another in his chest which passed through his left arm & entered the chest through the top past the sternum. Probe enters the chest 3-4 inches. the second ball entered the right side between 10th & 11th ribs passed backwards & removed as stated two inches to the left of spinous process of 2nd lumbar vertebra. whole portion below lower wound paralyzed. Sad condition of things for his friends were over kind in warming his feet after was wounded with heated "rocks" burned his feet so one or more of his toes would have to be removed if should recover but he didn't know as sensation & motion both are gone. For such I have no sympathy, professional honor compells me to treat all alike so far as prescribing; but as murderer I can see suffering without being excited much. Such cannot be won by kindness. twice I understand he had been taken by our men, twice taken the *Oath* & still continued his bushwhacking. Such is Southern honor, would that the whole race were as near the great change as he seems to be.

Two days later Trowbridge said the bushwhacker was not yet dead. On March 10th the wounded man was transferred to a Rebel household. "had we deemed recovery possible should have kept him hoping to hang soon as sufficiently recovered to walk." Some days later Trowbridge heard the man had died, and he said he was "glad if true."

#### CIVILIAN PRACTICE: INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Early in December 1863 Trowbridge rejoiced that he did not have to make house calls as he did at home; patients had to come to see him. That soon

changed, for he had to take care of civilians as well as soldiers with infectious diseases.

Measles appeared among recruits, country boys who had not been exposed at home. In March Trowbridge wrote: "We expect to have  $1/2$  of the new recruits in Hosp in few days all have to be seasoned to soldiering." The disease spread to townsmen, for in April Trowbridge said: "Darkie just here to have me go & see his wife sick measles which is going the rounds proving fatal ever & anon." He "found no real satisfaction" in such practice "except affording an opportunity for observing the action of remedies."

After having made his second round of visiting outpatients, Trowbridge wrote in the evening of February 22 that two patients had died, one of "typho-pneumonia and chronic diarrhea."

The other was a little girl, colored or a mixture for months she had drooped. the poor scrofulous little thing lingered on became a living skeleton piteous to behold & at length died; if my dear wife was a member of the glorious Profession the minutia might be interesting. but will simply say autopsy showed a mass of disease beyond what diagnosed. From observation since here where the mixture is the rule & not the exception scrofula prevails to a wonderful extent. So general that it is difficult to find an exception in the second generation.

At the end of November 1863 Trowbridge had been to Murfreesboro in an unsuccessful attempt to be officially mustered in, and he wrote: "Smallpox raging in Murfreesboro among the colored people." Smallpox soon appeared among both soldiers and civilians in McMinnville, and Trowbridge was busy with it for the next four months.

Smallpox reached McMinnville January 4, 1864:

Slight change for the better among patients at Hospital some bid fair to recover, others to go the way of all the earth. Interesting to Surgeon to witness failures in one sense after another as the powers of life fail at the approach of the Great Destroyer. Such is life waning disease advancing Earth fading the pilgrimage ending. All things ending. Tomorrow am ordered to make a tour of vaccination of contrabands. Small pox in the place. We are vaccin. our soldiers.<sup>14</sup>

Then on January 7:

Let me specify A.M. with sick, prescribed some. Was detailed to vaccinate all contrabands in the village. Made arrangement to that effect to take place P.M. was sent to examine all small pox case to see if she could be removed to decent quarters, decided she could be moved, so reported. This case is a bad one, a middle aged woman. Her sister is with her & between them have 6 I believe little ones, none not even the sister have been vaccinated till this A.M. I vaccinated the lot. They lived in an old log barn so open the snow blew all over them, most of the children poorly clad & without shoes. Husband in the Reb. Army I believe, family left to the tender mercies hospitality & care of the Goths & Vandals from the North. P.M. helped Dr. B. vaccinate

a hundred or over soldiers & then repair to rendezvous of contrabands to carry out orders. I must say I was not a little surprised to see cloud after cloud of every shade and variety come. It was lively work for the little Doctor. Still they came, plied the lancet till about 5 P.M. when adjourned for next P.M. Recd. order on my way to quarters to move the Small Pox family immediately & found three men who had had the small pox to help & off we started on our errand of mercy. Everything went off well, moved family &c about a mile. rough road & cold night. Children got very cold. saw them quite comfortable for the night. returned to quarters feeling more than twenty years old. Have the pleasure, honor &c of looking after the S.P. patients of this place. won't I have a fine time. Will try to convert as well as cure the family. We are trying to prevent further spread of the loathsome disease; how successful time alone will tell. hope our vigilance may counteract the carelessness of the 23 Mo. as this present arose from the family occupying the room & bunk which were occupied by one of the Mo. Reg. who had small pox; & they neglected to destroy or warn to that effect. Such is neglect.

Almost every day for the next two weeks Trowbridge reported on his smallpox patients. On January 16 he thought the first patient would not recover. Two children in the household were coming down with it. Then the next morning: "Variolus case in articulo mortis." And in the evening: "We put the loathsome object of corruption out of our sight, regretting not a little that we would not be able to perform the same kindness to every Reb. male or female, young or old." By January 28 most smallpox patients were recovering: "shall dismiss in a few days; a very good lesson in inoculation showing in 7 cases much can be done to hold back the most loathsome of diseases to behold." There were no other cases in the village, but smallpox appeared among the soldiers as well as among the civilians in April:

6 variolid cases in Hosp doing well 6 variola in Small Pox Hosp  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile out this morn visit quite comfortable. At evening visit 2 complaining severely & bid fair to be grave if not fatal. The appearance of variola rather increases my labors as it places my patients  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile asunder, giving some exercise to make visits. whether can prevent the further spread of the loathsome disease is a question of much interest to soldiers & citizens. We have as yet only guessed at its source as tis strange that 12 patients some of whom have not left hosp for several weeks should be exposed at the same time or so near it as all have the primary fever at same time; it must have been brought into the ward, I think by some of the 5th Tenn Cav. how true my surmise may be matters not as the fact is a dozen men sick with the Small Pox & several more severe cases expected.

More cases, some mild on account of previous vaccination, did appear. When orders came to close the hospital in preparation for the impending advance, Trowbridge said it would have been easy had not smallpox broken out. On April 16 he wrote they would have to leave some smallpox patients behind, but on the 22nd they left only one.

### Chattanooga to Atlanta

The regiments in McMinnville began to move in March 1864. On the 28th Trowbridge wrote that the General Hospital had been inspected by a senior surgeon in preparation for closing it, and in the next two weeks he was busy making out discharge papers for "soldiers who amount to nothing in the service." On April 17 the regiment received orders to join the brigade.

Together with the 33rd and 85th Indiana Volunteer Infantry and the 22nd Wisconsin, Trowbridge's regiment formed the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Division of the XX Army Corps. At the beginning of the campaign, that corps with 60,000 men was the largest of the three corps under General Sherman's command. Trowbridge wrote that "the probability is there will be no general engagement this side of Atlanta," but he also wrote: "Permit me again to say do not let anxiety for my welfare disturb your peace of mind, be assured it will not better my condition while makes you miserable indeed. I have no fears of starving or being shot & if should tis glorious to die for ones country & leave the *Widow a Pension*."

#### ON THE MARCH

Trowbridge was accompanied by a hospital steward, and together they were responsible for medical and surgical supplies, hospital tents for the regiment, and litters. Every so often, when the steward was away, Trowbridge himself made pills and took care of the panniers of medicines carried by a mule.<sup>15</sup> The United States Sanitary Commission said that surgical supplies were best carried in a cart, and the Autenrieth Medicine Wagon became standard equipment.<sup>16</sup> If there was one in his regiment, Trowbridge never mentioned it.

In June 1864 General Thomas ordered the consolidation of brigade hospitals into division hospitals, and thereafter Trowbridge often described his service in the division hospital. Such a hospital could be carried in six wagons, and was served by an ambulance corps of about 100 men driving 30 two-horse ambulances.

#### SICKNESS ON THE MARCH

Trowbridge sent his wife an abstract of his medical report for the month of August 1864. Daily sick list had averaged four, and the complaints were

Cold—3	Fever, intermittent—11
Acute diarrhoea—12	Congestion of the kidneys—3
Chronic diarrhoea—7	“Ophthal.”—2
Dysentery—7	Scurvy—2
Fever, remittent—7	

Some of Trowbridge's treatment can be deduced from how he dosed himself, but Alonzo B. Palmer's *Treatise on the Science and Practice of Medicine* is a certain source of information on the subject.<sup>17</sup>

When Trowbridge was a medical student at Michigan, Palmer was Professor of the Practice of Medicine, and gave upward of 200 lectures a year. The content of some of those lectures is preserved in student notebooks of the day,<sup>18</sup> but toward the end of his life Palmer summarized his accumulated wisdom in his two-volume treatise that epitomized medical thought just before Osler blew away the cobwebs with his own textbook.

This is what Trowbridge could have heard Palmer say: a cold “may safely be left without special treatment,” but if a drug is necessary, use morphine, tincture of aconite or potassium iodide. All three were in Trowbridge's pannier. Acute diarrhea is marked by frequent stools unaccompanied by tenesmus, and tenesmus might or might not be present in chronic diarrhea. Dysentery is defined as “bloody flux.” Diarrhea might be caused by diet, so Trowbridge thought, but neither he nor Palmer had any means to discover its cause. Palmer said that “nothing equals preparations of opium to sooth the inflamed intestine,” and because Trowbridge dosed himself with opium whenever he had diarrhea we can be sure he gave it freely to his patients. Palmer cited a few temperature numbers in his discussion of fevers, but neither he nor Trowbridge regularly used a thermometer. There was none in Trowbridge's medical kit, and he worked before Wunderlich had “found fever a disease and left it a symptom.”<sup>19</sup> In his long discussion of fevers, Palmer made no real distinction between remittent and intermittent fevers, considering each to be malarial. Palmer and Trowbridge, of course, knew nothing about the malaria plasmodia, and anyway they had no microscopes to examine blood smears. They could only “give quinine in full antimalarial quantity.” In addition, as his letters show, Trowbridge, like many contemporary physicians, used quinine for any fever. Palmer defined “congestion of the kidneys” as hyperemia resulting from action of irritating

substances, exposure to cold or wet, or paralysis of vasomotor nerves. The urine is often bloody, scanty in quantity, and full of casts. With no training in clinical microscopy, Trowbridge could judge the presence of blood and casts only from the urine's gross appearance. For treatment, Palmer said the most frequently used anodynes are morphine and camphor, and he recommended use of diaphoretics. Under the circumstances, Trowbridge could not use the bed rest and warm baths recommended by Palmer.

Trowbridge's letters contain no indication of the nature of the "Ophthal." problem. A history of Confederate medicine records occurrence of night blindness,<sup>20</sup> and the "sore eyes" Trowbridge observed at other times may have been xerophthalmia caused by vitamin A deficiency.

On July 8, 1864 Trowbridge wrote that several soldiers had suffered sunstroke. "There is certainly more danger of overheating here than North sunlight heat more intense with nearer vertical rays than too our clothing is not the best to reflect light and heat." He mentioned sunstroke several more times before Atlanta was occupied in September.

#### SCURVY

Trowbridge knew that the army rations in McMinnville were qualitatively inadequate. They had always been bad; the yearly attack rate of scurvy in the regular army before the war had been 26.3 per 1,000 men. On the march to Atlanta, rations were even worse. Trowbridge, who frequently wrote a few lines before breakfast, said: "Breakfast, hard tack, meat and coffee." A little later he wrote: "Breakfast next in order variety coffee meat and bread." Other meals were no better. Early on the march Trowbridge had written, "Enjoy army rations now like Kings, id est, supper: hard tack boiled bacon, & cup of coffee, just the diet to give nerve and muscle tonicity."

On May 19, after the battle of Resaca, Trowbridge said the soldiers were exhausted. "A vegetable diet would be a treat not only for the palate but preservative of health for many of our soldiers show effects of diet. Unless we get vegetables there will be trouble with scurvy among us." There had been two cases of scurvy in his regiment the week before, and thereafter the incidence increased (see table). In contrast, when Trowbridge took care of Confederate wounded he wrote: "I have seen no signs of scurvy there is a general healthy fresh appearance indicative of plenty & good variety of food & all say have plenty & are well clothed with home spun quality of coarse linen made by *pilgrim mothers*; more durable & better for summer than our dress."

There was scurvy in the Confederate army.<sup>21</sup>

Until he left Atlanta for Savannah on November 15, Trowbridge regularly reported scurvy. He told his wife:

Scurvy is one of the loathsome diseases men are subjected to when kept on uniform diet as salt meat & hard bread with little or no vegetables. In most cases *Purpura haemorrhagica* the blood seems dissolved & exudes from the whole mucous surface & skin looks as if it had been bruised all over, gums spongy teeth loose, diarrhoea general failure of vital powers emaciation & death. With us now cases rather mild, have had worse former gums spongy, legs & ankles covered with sores surrounding with dark brown or purple areola, very painful smart & itch.

General Sherman thought scurvy was a temporary problem, but he gave the reason for its occurrence:

[W]e were also liberally supplied with lime-juice, sauer-kraut, and pickles, as an antidote to scurvy, and I now recall the extreme anxiety of my medical director, Dr. Kittoe, about the scurvy, which he reported at one time to be spreading and imperiling the army. This occurred at a crisis about Kennesaw [June 1864], when the railroad was taxed to its utmost capacity to provide the necessary ammunition, food, and forage, and could not possibly bring us an adequate supply of potatoes and cabbage, the usual antiscorbutics.<sup>22</sup>

Sherman's main base was Louisville, and supplies were carried 338 miles by rail to Chattanooga. When transport authorities told Sherman they did not have enough rolling stock, Sherman ordered them to seize every engine as it arrived in Louisville from the north, and forbade carrying civilians or civilian goods. Sherman's army advanced down the 137-mile single-track line from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and as it went engineers replaced rails and rebuilt bridges destroyed by the retreating enemy. Every so often the line behind the army was broken by a Confederate cavalry raid. Once Trowbridge wrote: "Rumors come that the RR between us and Chattanooga is cut but hope untrue if true down we go on 1/2 or less rations." When the line was uninterrupted, trains of 10 cars, each car carrying 10 tons, ran in groups of four at ten miles an hour. Usually they reached within five miles of the front, but sometimes the opposing Confederate forces were discouraged by the sound of a Federal engine whistle nearby. Rations were distributed from the trains to the troops by wagon. It rained almost continuously during June, miring the wagons in mud, and Trowbridge wrote that "it seems almost an impossibility to keep our trains of ammunition & provisions with the troops."

Along the line of march cribs were full of corn from last year's harvest, and organized forage parties gathered corn for horses and mules. Once Trowbridge wrote: "What think you the young man 2 rods from me who is now gathering corn where some mules have been fed, to roast and thereby satisfy hunger, out of rations for some time? The great wonder is no more lack than



INCIDENCE OF SCURVY IN SHERMAN'S ARMY DURING  
THE GEORGIA CAMPAIGN CONTRASTED WITH  
SCURVY IN GRANT'S ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.\*

		<i>Sherman's army</i>			<i>Grant's army</i>		
		<i>Mean strength</i>	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Mean strength</i>	<i>Cases</i>	<i>Deaths</i>
1864	July	137,167	914		74,589	43	
	August	132,296	859	5	55,105	65	
1865	September	129,405	620	1	60,897	48	
	October	118,800	229	2	72,581	19	
	November	78,928	52		74,561	22	
	December	77,585	15		97,235	32	
	January	75,851	65		104,436	52	
	February	70,707	11		105,635	30	
	March	69,818	14		109,707	36	2
	April	75,184	56		110,233	20	

\*From Tables LXXXVII and LXXXV, part II, *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*. Washington, D.C., Govt. Print. Off., 1875, part 1, vol. 1.

The numbers for Sherman's army are those for the troops on the campaign from Chattanooga, and they do not include an approximately equal number of others on duty northward. Separation of data began in July 1864, and consequently there are no figures for those in the southward marching army before July. Atlanta was occupied September 2, 1864.

is most need a change of diet, fruit & vegetables to guard against scurvy. Dinner next in order, beans."

There was some but not much unorganized foraging. Sherman's strategy of repeated flank movements around General Joseph E. Johnston's Confederate army kept his troops almost continually marching and skirmishing, and when they stopped, they were occupied by digging elaborate field fortifications. The country was not very productive. When he was already in sight of Atlanta Trowbridge wrote: "We are enjoying frequent showers & crops look well but the June sun is too hot for wheat—which is considerably shrunk & other crops are not much in advance of the North as should expect corn only in best fields has begun to tassel out. beans just show blossoms apples rather behind the North in size as well as quality. Grapes good size."

Trowbridge looked out for himself: "I eat about everything that grows in woods or garden to keep off scurvy." The soldiers also ate whatever they could find. On July 3 Trowbridge wrote: "Am now stopping on a beautiful plantation was splendid orchard well loaded, splendid for this country but the boys have been so long on army rations a few hours were enough to strip the trees; twill do the boys good as there are many touched with scurvy." At another time he had written: "Yesterday we had some whort-

leberries a treat & good preventive of scurvy. Fruit will soon be available apples fair size berries going to be a world of them in a few weeks strawberries ripe several weeks ago only saw few. Blackberries getting ripe fruit soon to be eatable, we had some green applesauce a few days ago." Sherman himself had said: "I have seen the skirmish-line, without orders, to fight a respectable battle for the possession of some old fields that were full of blackberries."<sup>23</sup>

The commissariat did make an ineffectual effort to supply antiscobutics. Once Trowbridge wrote: "Supper is about ready & a rare dish, desiccated vegetable soup a change from hard bread & meat of the past month." Desiccated potatoes were also supplied, but the soldiers called them "desecrated potatoes." Unfortunately, their ascorbic acid had been destroyed by the process of drying.

The other antiscorbutics Sherman listed were supplied, not by the Medical Bureau of the Army, but by the United States Sanitary Commission. The Commission, a civilian agency, had been established by order of the Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, on June 9, 1861, and had been approved by President Lincoln four days later. Thereafter the Commission worked in uneasy relation with Cameron's successor, Edwin M. Stanton. It depended entirely upon private liberality for support, and over the years it collected large amounts of money which it spent on medical supplies that should have been provided by the Government itself. For example, between September 1, 1861 and September 1, 1863 its western branches issued supplies ranging from 270,276 towels and handkerchiefs to 205,632 pounds of bandages and 3,309 pairs of crutches.<sup>24</sup> The Commission also sent antiscorbutics to the troops. George Templeton Strong, the Commission's treasurer, wrote in his diary one evening that he had just bought \$25,000 worth of pickled cucumbers and preserved tomatoes, and at another time he said he had chartered a ship in New York to carry supplies to City Point, Grant's base in Virginia.<sup>25</sup> In May 1864 the Commission sent to the army before Richmond: 4,291 gallons of pickled tomatoes, 51,812 pounds of canned tomatoes, 1,106 gallons of curried tomatoes, 671 barrels of dried apples, 15,168 gallons of sauerkraut, 4,162 gallons of pickles, 3,580 gallons of pickled onions, 12,060 pounds of apple pulp, 2,400 boxes of lemonade, 1 tub of apple butter, and 1 dozen ginger wine.<sup>26</sup> Distribution of antiscorbutics in the east was not entirely effective, for, as the table shows, there was scurvy in Grant's army as well as in Sherman's. The Sanitary Commission sent similar consignments to the Western Department, but none reached the fighting men on their way to Atlanta.

Scurvy continued to occur after the army entered Atlanta early in September. Three weeks later Trowbridge wrote:

Health of Regt. fair some fever as might expect & scurvy seems on increase much to my regret for if we enter upon a winter campaign subject these men already suffering from scorbutic to uniform army diet, damp cool weather & hardships of an active winter advance movement the effect is going to be many sent to hospitals & the rear nearly or quite used up. Surely we ought to have fresh vegetables once a day at least once a month & were all honest from reported contributions to the San. U.S.A. all soldiers in the field should have at least once a season see a dish of kroust &c. do not wish to prove general fault finder but know the people at home are swindled in their contributions for the health of the soldiers so far as an occasional meal of vegetables are concerned. I speak for this Dept. only. But very little Sanitary stores reach the front not half enough for nurses, attendants & officers who of course are entitled to share but the great mass of contributions are left rather detained at Louisville & places in the rear to be used on the sumptuous tables at those places in hospitals of course & what the objection you may ask just this there is not a hospital in the rear but what has as much as a fine Hosp. Fund increasing every day. After purchasing all such articles which can to a great extent be had from the country & market at these places. Even at McMinnville in small Hosp. there was nearly 800 dollars Hosp. Fund a saving from unused rations for the sick: now why not use these savings & permit the contributions to reach soldiers in the front in the trenches where there is nothing to be had save army rations. There is wrong somewhere agents fail to do their duty are remiss in short are not honest & considering the facts in the case I have no word to offer by way of encouragement to those at home to give you might contribute the produce of a whole farm requesting to be sent to the front & I don't believe a potato would ever reach the soldiers in front. I am not speaking because have any th[ing] personal against the scheme as have not for expect nothing save what I pay for. But I have men that ought to be benefited by their family contributions that ought to be reached by the San. Com. stores but are not. Tis of little cheer to a soldier to know that if he sickens at the front & death has fastened a firm grasp upon him he may perhaps be sent to the rear where the home contributions reach & may enjoy rather gaze upon that which if sent to the front where designed & distributed as intended would have saved the tide of life rapidly ebbing away. I have lost men on this campaign from scurvy that could have been saved by timely & urgent change in diet to be had if San. Com. done its duty which it has assumed &c. I have concluded that San. Com. Christian Aid Soc. & chaplains are 3 about as extensive Swindlers as can be found in the whole Army & Navy arrangement. I do not wonder Soldiers & officers are desirous to get to the rear where the home supplies reach & a diet well adapted to the preservation of health. The views & sympathies at home are very erroneous as to what class should have the luxuries of diet &c. What a rush after a great battle to care and provide for the wounded but after tedious campaign through miasmatic district with scarce a healthy man or appetite left no thought of how a good meal of vegetables a pickle &c would be to the debilitated. I feel the force of this being with those who are expected to do duty & show the wear of exposure & effect of diet. Day has been warm. No excitement about town.

The next day Trowbridge wrote: "Have some San. Com. Onions for breakfast."

#### COMBAT

When he left McMinnville, Trowbridge knew that the army was headed for Atlanta, but he knew nothing of Sherman's strategy or that of the Confederate General Johnston facing Sherman. He sometimes reported gossip, but he knew that what he called "the grape-vine telegraph" was unreliable. His wife read the papers at home, and once Trowbridge asked: "Lebbie what are we really doing. We hear various rumors. We small officers not permitted to know the orders before time to execute them." Nevertheless, Trowbridge soon came to have complete confidence in General Sherman.

As the army advanced down the Chattanooga-to-Atlanta railroad, Johnston withdrew from Dalton, a station about 20 miles south of Chattanooga, and concentrated at Resaca eighteen miles further on. On May 10, as the 19th Michigan was approaching Resaca, Trowbridge wrote that some wounded were being brought in. "One was shot through the left thigh comminuting the bone 3 inches in a very bad wound removed several pieces of bone." On the morning of the 13th Trowbridge expected battle.<sup>27</sup> Trowbridge as the junior assistant surgeon was to be in the field, and his first duty was to detect malingering. Accompanied by his hospital steward and two or three male nurses, he would have plenty of lint, bandages, plaster of Paris, water, sponges, and a few of the most frequently required medicines. A sergeant would be in charge of stretcher bearers. During the engagement Trowbridge was to perform immediate necessary care of the wounded and send them to the rear as quickly as he could. His orders stated: "There are many other acts of kindness that can be extended by a Surgeon that will have the effect of improving the morale of the command. He does not rest until everything is done that can contribute to the comfort of the wounded." Trowbridge was instructed, if possible, to keep a memorandum of each man he dressed and after the battle to give a report to his commanding officer. When a soldier died, Trowbridge was also required to notify the commanding officer, to collect the soldier's effects, and eventually to arrange for burial.

At 5 P.M. on the 13th Trowbridge wrote: "Am sitting on fence watching the battle not far beyond is a battery of our guns sending its missiles of death into the woods beyond occupied by the Rebs. Lebbie I wish I was one of the combatants can hardly stay back the music is so exciting those big guns and screeching shells seem to call me in thunder tones but orders are Dr. keep out of danger." A little later he wrote that his "curiosity as to the

roar of a battle has been to a great degree satisfied'' and that his regiment was in line waiting for orders to advance. Sherman's army drove Johnston's forces from Resaca on May 15. When the 19th Michigan charged it captured a four gun battery, and its commanding officer was killed. Trowbridge said "it was terrible a great sacrifice of life and limb" and that it was sickening to see men torn to pieces. The next day he wrote:

I was on the field out of harms way rather had to move 3 times to keep out of range of shot & shell, to dress & prepare wounded for transportation to Divis Hosp 2 miles back. Removed balls & dressed what could. several surgeons on the field & about the same number at work in Hosp. All were not removed until today as could not be found at Hosp surgs worked all night & this morn. I went over & worked till noon amputating &c then as Brig moved had to leave, should think several hundred had not been cared for. What entire loss cannot say. Concluded from ground covered with wounded at Hosp of 3rd Divis. must have been near 800, whether as many at 1st & 2nd Divis cannot say.

The Rebels retreated, "but it is horrible to see how they left the wounded about fifty severe cases were left; in charge of them a Dr. who had nothing not even rations."

After his regiment charged at Cassville on the 22nd Trowbridge wrote of its losses: "Wounded were sent back to more secure place so have but little to do caring for that class. Our loss is now ascertained to be killed and wounded during the week commencing Sunday 15th to Sat 21st 87 killed or mortally wounded and died soon. 14 others no doubt will succumb to severity of their wounds."

At New Hope Church a night battle on June 25 was "particularly horrible." Trowbridge "worked on the field in the rain till 2 this morning dressing the wounded so far as could ascertain the 19th didn't lose as many as at the battle of Resaca. We builded a fire for a light to work by using pine knots answered the purpose admirably rather a necessity to be sure." When the Rebels attacked "Twas a shower of Reb missles where your Dr. was & though attendants ran away must say the Dr. remained alone till the storm passed & came out all safe. Our loss trivial." A week later Surgeon Potter of the 105th Illinois "followed his Reg. a little beyond us and was killed so there is danger even before surgeons." The Brigade Surgeon censured Trowbridge for exposing himself and ordered him to stay well back "out of range of sharpshooters who are picking off a great number of our men."

At Kennesaw Mountain, the 19th Michigan made a flanking movement. Trowbridge reported "wholesale murder" in that battle. When his regiment was preparing for a "terrible engagement" at Culp's Farm on June 23 Trowbridge wrote:

So far as self am concerned have satisfaction to say well & enjoying life. Not yet Lebbie have I enough of the front, if it be necessary to soldier let me be where there is active duty. True tis unpleasant to see life & limb sacrificed but such is the natural consequence of war am in favor of vigorous prosecution though it be at great cost; the aggregate am satisfied would be less than a mild halfway policy. Death is not a pleasant theme to contemplate nor the slain to behold, but must say rejoice to see the slain of the enemy; the mangled corpse left by the retreating foe gives rise to no unpleasant feelings, pass it by, wishing the same fate to all rebs, death or unconditional surrender is my doctrine.

When he was working in the hospital Trowbridge continued in the same vein: "Another day of active exercise in hosp at table with instruments has passed. A.M. operated mostly on Rebs. which of course enjoyed thinking when amputating a leg had finished the soldiering of Reb. As to condition for enduring operation they equal if not surpass our men. We captured a Reb Dr & set him to work on Reb wounded, rather an inferior appearing man." When the enemy was repulsed "with terrible slaughter" Trowbridge said: "Tis enough to make rejoice to know killed and wounded far more enemy than cost besides prisoners taken. Their dead are on our hands as we hold the battlefield of yesterday." He reported that horses, mules, and men were buried with only a few inches of dirt thrown over them. "Antigone in the Grecian tragedy buried her brother according to modern military when she sprinkled dust over his body."

### HOSPITAL WORK

Trowbridge lent a hand in the division hospital whenever he could, and occasionally had to substitute there for a drunken surgeon. The surgeon wasn't the only one who drank, for Trowbridge wrote on August 13: "Regt advanced 20-30 rods into new line of works more exposed to reb fire. Skirmish line was to advance but officers too drunk to do duty so opportunity lost." Sometimes Trowbridge was put in charge of the division hospital to replace a surgeon who was sick.

Work was burdensome in the division hospital during an engagement. Trowbridge worked steadily for two days after the battle of Peach Tree Creek on July 20, hardly stopping to breathe.

After the action was fairly begun reported to Div. Hosp for duty. soon the wounded began to come & at sunset 250 names I think were reported. Came in all night & still come. Used the knife 8 1/2 AM this morn then only rested to give attendants time to rest. My orderly Marcus Daniels of Florence [Michigan] who attended me with medicine &c on every former engagement asked to remain on the field to care for our men what could do as both Surgs were at Hosp was wounded through the foot quite

severely.<sup>28</sup> Expect to be busy for several days. Amidst sighs & groans am expected to be jovial & happy cheering the suffering, sustaining the weak, healing the wounded. At that time Trowbridge was occupying a "splendid mansion," fortified with cotton bales, as a hospital, but he had to give it up on the 25th because Sherman wanted it for his headquarters.

During that busy period Trowbridge performed at least one successful operation. The *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865* contains enormous tables recording both successes and failures. In Part II, Volume II, Table LXX, "Condensed Summary of One Thousand and Nineteen Cases of Recovery After Primary Amputation in the Middle Third of the Shaft of the Humerus" Trowbridge is credited with having amputated the right arm of Pvt. H. F. Granger, age 23, who was discharged and pensioned on May 11, 1866. Only one of the other four patients recorded as having been operated upon by Trowbridge survived.

On June 26 Trowbridge had written: "Visited Divis 3rd Hospital tough time for wounded so hot & the green flies are as plenty here as the ordinary housefly with you the result you may imagine where there is neglect in cleanliness." After the battle of Peach Tree Creek there were perhaps 100 Rebels to be operated upon, and Trowbridge said filth, flies, and maggots were "terrible: of course I enjoy such work as tis military necessity." Later in the evening he wrote: "Class of wounds of rebs in our hands very grave & with limited facilities for comfort of sick & wounded in field 200 or more miles from base of supplies many must prove fatal. Even now most cases both Reb & Union full of maggots 24 hours is sufficient to have wound filled with life." Joseph Jones, the Confederate surgeon, noticed that maggots destroyed diseased tissue and left wounds in a healthy condition.<sup>29</sup> Neither Trowbridge nor anyone else in the Union army made the same observation, and maggots in wounds were killed by turpentine or chloroform, thus increasing the agony of the wounded.<sup>30</sup>

### Atlanta

Soon after he entered Atlanta, Trowbridge described the abandoned fortifications and the wreckage of the railroad yard where the Rebels had burned nearly 100 cars filled with ammunition. He saw a supply of hand grenades, each about 4 1/2 inches long and filled with fine powder, designed to be thrown into the ranks of a storming party. He told his wife how soldiers collected spent bullets on account of the shortage of lead, how he was now sleeping in a house and how he was engaging in civilian practice as he had in McMinnville.

## CIVILIANS

On September 8 two families, claiming to be Union people, came to Trowbridge for professional services. He said that "being ambitious to acquire professional knowledge [he] will not object to considerable outside practice." Thereafter "Your Dr. has been quite busy caring for sick of Reg & others in town. The Lady visited last evening is better today with prospects of speedy recovery if has good care. Called this PM to see a sick lady Prussian by birth good union people say." Once after seeing six patients he returned to quarters for dinner, having "refused dinner at citizens houses." Later he "visited a quite interesting family in City Saw a girl 14-15 that had been wounded by a piece of shell during the siege. terrible flesh wound of shoulder doing well. Eastern people & good union. kind to our men when prisoners in reb. hands." The shell had hit the house in which the girl was living. On February 26, when he was in North Carolina, Trowbridge received a letter from this patient saying she had recovered.

Toward the end of September Trowbridge said the changeable weather caused great sickness among children, and he had been told it was difficult to raise a child to three years. Before the war 20 had died each week. On September 26 he "was called to see sick child today, not very sick but dirty nasty & silly appearing 14 months old, that made me think babies a great nuisance devoid of loveliness or decency & is natural wondered if my baby was such a sweet little nasty lump." Three weeks later he saw another sick baby "very pleasant to be sure." The next day he wrote:

my sick baby is going to die as told mother yesterday. danger was head symptoms. Encephalitis which think will carry the little sufferer beyond the bound of time & sorrow: was called early this morn to see the little one & must admit was quite indifferent as to result even of all cases have treated in town care but little as to result; why is it unless that we were exposed to dangers so long before we captured the city that it seems as though every man woman & child were enemies to all soldiers & would stab us in a moment if opportunity should offer; such feeling will cling to me & cannot banish the thought of treachery: I do distrust the bland smile the loyal protestations the avowed zeal for the Union cause now we are in power. My baby still lives though a bad case of brain fever which will soon I think terminate, a very interesting case to study showing the onward march of the disease.

The next day he wrote: "Just home from visit to Baby patient died this morn. The parents are cast down not discerning the advantage to the child to be released from the bondage of earth."

## SOLDIERS

A division hospital had been set up as soon as the army entered Atlanta. "Visit 3 Div Hosp fine location for field Hosp not very good accommoda-



tions no straw for beds simple boards not very soft for poor men with scarce flesh enough to cover bones." Sick and wounded began to come in, but Trowbridge reported that business in his department was about average and that he was not overworked. On September 22 he wrote: "Health of Reg not changed rather a predominance of Typhomalarial fever of mild type partially I think due to tedious & protracted campaign many were kept up by excitement of everyday strife that since the city where all is quiet have yielded; in other cases there is lack of energy, too great a readiness to yield to the slight aches & ails of flesh & blood." Then and for many years afterwards typhoid fever was often called "typhomalarial fever," a supposed mixture of typhoid fever and malaria.<sup>31</sup>

Trowbridge found "Fevers & Bloody flux rather on the increase perhaps owing to reduction of diet which is scarce aught but Pilot bread & coffee," but he was pleased that the variety of illnesses he encountered gave him "fair exercise of powers of discrimination, diagnosis & therapeutics." He himself had diarrhoea and "Took opiate this A.M. & as usual have the unpleasant effects of nausea itching &c. but object in view attained quieting of bowels." Later he said "I am feeling more like self though eyes are very lame as though strained them by looking at some fair damsel of Ga. or endeavoring to see stars through pink bottle which I notice effects [sic] the eyes of several of the profession."

Trowbridge visited the Medical College of Atlanta,

now Hosp for 2nd Div. 14 A.C. An inferior edifice. Patients doing finely wounded Sep 1st from Jonesboro wards are much crowded but Surgs. report no erysipelas or gangrene, both of which troubled the rebs. for they occupied the same building; reasons care on part of our Surgs & here is proof that it is far better for the men to be cared for by their own field Surgs who are personally interested & will do their duty than be sent to the rear to be treated rather neglected by contracts [Contract Surgeons] & those serving simply for their pay, caring nothing for the wounded. Such is military.

#### FORAGING

The railroad line from Chattanooga was kept open, but the army in Atlanta was no better supplied with food than it had been on the march. Trowbridge repeatedly complained about the diet of hard tack and the lack of fresh vegetables. Draft animals suffered more, and on October 15 Trowbridge said that horses and mules without grain or hay were dropping down at every corner. Ten days later he was detailed to go on a foraging expedition with the 85th Indiana, for there was no surgeon in that regiment. The party was far larger than the usual detachment of 50 men and an officer. Trowbridge wrote from the "field 5 miles north of Stone Mt. Ga." that he was with

2,800 infantry, 1,000 cavalry, 2 batteries and “perhaps 1,000 noncombatants & thieves, robbers &c &c including the dregs of God’s creation found in perfection only in an army.” In one day the party loaded 150 wagons, and it expected to load the same number the next day. “As a matter of course we live on the fat of the land have sweet potatoes &c for breakfast.” The party was back in Atlanta on the 29th.

### PAY

For a year after he was mustered in Trowbridge complained that he had “not received a dime since left Michigan.” His wife’s efforts to collect money due him in Centerville provoked Trowbridge’s numerous remarks that the practice of medicine is one of the most thankless businesses ever engaged in. He said “Med Profes. a *slough* of *despond* where he can never expect to get his dues,” and he dreamed of leaving the profession altogether after the war.

Finally, on November 1, 1864 Trowbridge wrote: “Out of sorts, narcotized last evening was troubled with diarrhoea & this morn took opium & frumenti [Spiritus frumenti = whiskey] which combined came well nigh intoxicating your Dr. but nothing strange. After pay day we expect some indulgence.” He would send the money northward, but he didn’t know how. After thinking of buying a draft on a Kalamazoo bank and then changing his mind several times, Trowbridge bought 10 \$100 interestbearing bonds payable to Lebbie’s order, a method recommended by the Paymaster. Then on November 3 he wrote: “Last evening put into the Express office \$1,000 in \$100 coupon bonds which have been drawing interest since Aug 15th 64.” The prepaid express charge was \$4.50. Trowbridge kept the numbers of the bonds so that Lebbie could enter a claim if they were lost, and he sent the numbers in two separate letters. On December 17, when he was near Savannah, Trowbridge received six letters from her, in one of which she enclosed a \$5 note. The bonds had arrived safely.

### Atlanta to Savannah

When General Hood evacuated Atlanta, he marched west and then north to attack Sherman’s communications with Chattanooga. There was some severe fighting along the railroad, but the line was kept open until Sherman voluntarily cut his communications and “transferred his base” to Savannah. When he had made up his mind to abandon Atlanta, Sherman told his plans to no one but his most senior officers, and arranged with the authorities in

Washington to send a fleet with supplies, including a 5,000 bed hospital, to meet him in Savannah.

#### PREPARATION FOR THE MOVE

A week after capturing Atlanta, Sherman ordered the army to rest in Atlanta for a month or so and to reorganize for a winter campaign. Trowbridge, who had no idea Sherman would cut his communications with Chattanooga, heard a rumor that his regiment would be detailed to guard the railroad. He said: "but for my part if can have choice let me go into the field in advance where is active work; had rather treat a soldier wounded by a *ball* than by a *Ladie*." This is Trowbridge's only reference to venereal disease though earlier he had written that "There will be more need of care on part of mothers after the soldiers return than ever before as lovely daughters will be ruined."

On October 23 Trowbridge received the "official order to send all not fit for field service in 15 days to Hosp. Sounds like something ahead." Ambulatory sick and wounded went to Chattanooga and eventually to an enormous hospital in Nashville.<sup>32</sup> The hospital train that had arrived in Atlanta from Marietta on the 14th "started north last evening [October 22] sick to be moved to the rear." This, and not any improvement in diet, accounts for the drastic drop in cases of scurvy from 229 in October to 52 in November (Table I). At the same time, Sherman's effective strength fell from 118,800 to 78,929, because the three-year enlistment of 20 veteran regiments expired, and the regiments marched cheerfully home, leaving the war to take care of itself. Those were not the only one who went north, for "our [U.S. Sanitary] commissioner is reported gone to the rear troubled with weakness of knees."

On November 6 the XX Army Corps moved out of the city except for seven regiments left in Atlanta on guard duty. Trowbridge stayed in the city to the last minute, for the 19th Michigan, now reduced to "between 3 & 4 hundred present for duty" was one of the seven.

The last train left for the north on the night of November 11, and Trowbridge was disturbed by burning houses which caused "ascending columns of smoke & flame." The next day destruction went rapidly on. "Just now the roof of the State Machine Shop & Engine house tumbled in with a tremendous crash. The Yanks, Samson like took out the pillar supporting roof & a mass of ruins marks the place of once beautiful shop. Presume fire will finish the work. The RR being torn up with iron burned & rails twisted

while hot so as to ruin completely.” On the evening of the 14th the city was in flames, and Trowbridge’s regiment was ordered to march at 7 the next morning to join its brigade.

### MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA

Trowbridge’s regiment marched through Georgia as part of the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, of the XX Army Corps under command of General Henry Warner Slocum. That corps formed the left wing of Sherman’s widely dispersed army. During the first part of the expedition the 3rd Division guarded the baggage train of the XX Army Corps “which makes heavy marching.” The train consisted of approximately 800 wagons and 200 ambulances,<sup>33</sup> and the train used the roads, such as they were, while troops marched at the sides. The division was often delayed while the train crossed a pontoon bridge. He wrote at 4 AM on November 26 that he had waited at a creek the night before. “The delay was such that the 3rd Div. being in the rear of Corps did not cross the creek but camped on the west side on beautiful reb. plantation & as it was a cold night you may imagine the fate of his pine rails, pigs, sheep, cotton, potatoes &c &c.” On December 2 the division marched all night in the rain, impeded by the baggage train, and the next night there was a “torch light procession through swamps.” Finally, on December 3, the 2nd Brigade was freed from the train, and thereafter it led the division. All that time, despite the train, Trowbridge’s regiment marched from 14 to 20 miles a day.

### HEALTH ON THE WAY

Four days after he left Atlanta Trowbridge wrote: “As you might expect several of our men feel the effects of this rough soldiering after a few months of comparative ease & expect more if we drive on at this R.R. speed. Must close now as soldiers have come to pull down the house to build a fire on RR.” Otherwise Trowbridge said nothing about medical problems except an occasional “Soldiers in very good contition.” Only 1.9% of the men reported sick on the march. There was one minor cavalry skirmish that left a few wounded on each side and “one killed for us.” On account of the rapid advance, camp sanitation was excellent so that “typhomalarial fever” had little opportunity to spread among the men. Only two soldiers with compound fracture were left behind.<sup>34</sup> The federal fleet brought a 5,000 bed hospital to Savannah, but only 500 beds were needed.

### FORAGING AND PILLAGING

One reason for good health was good food. Sherman ordered his army to "forage liberally on the country." The army left Atlanta with 3,476 head of cattle, for Sherman thought "there is no better food for man than beef cattle driven on the hoof."<sup>35</sup> It arrived in Savannah with more than 10,000 head, evidence of the ardor with which Sherman's order was obeyed. In addition, the infantry could turn over 800 horses to the cavalry.

On the march a forage party of 50 men left before daylight to scour the country five miles from the army's route. On the way it was usually able to add a farm wagon or a family carriage to its own means of transport. The forage party returned at evening to the road in advance of the baggage train. The rest of the army gathered everything it could find with the result that the men were handsomely supplied with ducks, sheep, hogs, bacon, corn, corn meal, sweet potatoes, and turnips. They scorned chicken, for they preferred turkeys. This lasted until the army reached the less productive and swampy regions near the coast where rice was the staple crop.

Trowbridge described the piano and other furnishings of a plantation house just before it was destroyed. The occupants were given 15 minutes to get out before the house was set afire, and in the meantime the soldiers helped themselves to anything they wanted. At Milledgeville the arsenal and other public buildings were wrecked, and Trowbridge said the destroyers worked all night. "Pillage of course continues." On December 3 he saw the bodies of some Union soldiers who, straying away, had been caught and executed by the Rebels for pillaging.

All that could not be eaten or carried was burned, and all cotton discovered was set afire. Trowbridge said the army marched between walls of fire and that a cloud of smoke hung overhead.

### Savannah to Washington

Trowbridge wrote to his wife on December 21 from within Savannah, describing the town and harbor gained by a bloodless victory, for "the scamps left during the night." On December 30 he was spectator at the review of the XX Army Corps. He explained to his wife that it was the custom for surgeons and their assistants not to march in a review; the review was for the effective force only. Surgeons were noncombatants, and "as surgeons are considered on duty at all times there seems to be little inclination to move in the column save the med directors & staff surgs." Now the army

was well supplied by way of the federal fleet, but oystermen returned "with supply of fresh oysters then call on us & enjoy the good things of the South." Trowbridge didn't like the oysters. "More work to prepare them than worth as only way of cooking roast or boil. am not favorably impressed with this kind of oysters."

Trowbridge received marching orders on the last day of the year. Many of the soldiers were drunk when the 3rd Division attempted to cross the Savannah River. The division was driven back by floods, and when it returned to its old quarters in the city it found them occupied by other troops. The next day the division was staged to Hutchinson's Island in the river and landed on a rice plantation. The 19th Michigan was ferried in two small boats while a steamboat carried the rest of the division. On January 5 they crossed to Hardee's Plantation on the South Carolina side of the river.

While waiting for floods to subside and horses and mules to be ferried across the river, Trowbridge did not have much to do. He sent a book of poems, a "relic of Atlanta," to his wife, and he wrote:

Have been reading Ossian this AM to break the monotony of camp life; what lofty strains bold figures, fine comparisons & strong expressions. Surely 'tis rich, a feast for hungry intellect—would that could share the pleasure with you. One Lt. is interested in the work as well as self; will try & send or bring the work home when returned after strife of contending armies shall cease to disturb the peace of our country.

He mailed Ossian's poem to his wife on March 29 from Goldsboro, North Carolina.

The last week he was in Savannah Trowbridge had written that he had sent two men to the hospital and that one remained sick in quarters. Now "begins to show some ague among my Reg. men. Am fully persuaded if we remain here during warm weather will be much malarial trouble. Remittent fevers seem to be on the increase & am somewhat of opinion tis owing partially at least to sleeping on Spanish Moss before heating to destroy vitality of the plant. It makes fine bed but rather damp as taken from trees."

While he was waiting on Hutchinson's Island Trowbridge received "Orders from Med. Dept. of Army to have everything in readiness to advance with expectation of work before us." He "sent to the city for supply of Med. to be ready for near campaign as we expect to be ordered forward in a few days. Malarial fevers continue to increase not to a fearful extent but so as to warn us what we may expect if we remain here during the summer." A gunboat brought supplies up the river, and Trowbridge said: "This A.M. have been supplying panniers for the advance." A little later he wrote: "Have been very busy this AM making pills. My orderly was sick

& sent him to Hospital so the little Doctor has to do the work of surg. Steward & ord. & then not overworked." He interrupted writing once to say: "But here comes a soldier from another Reg. to have an encysted tumor removed from his cheek. Evening stars shine to cheer the night. We, Dr. Coakley & self made the operation. removed a small but deep seated tumor from the left cheek."

At the end of January Trowbridge said: "But few sick. Fever prevailing trouble. My work not heavy." Then he sent an abstract of his report for January:

Mean Strength of Regiment:	356
Remaining from last report	2
Taken sick during January	58
Sent to Division Hospital	17
Returned to duty	40
Remaining sick	3
Average daily sick	5
The problems were	
Intermittent fever	20
Remittent fever	15
Diarrhoea	9
Rheumatism	8
Conjunctivitis	2
Dysentery	1
Bruise (fall from horse	1

He said the number with diarrhea was "more than average" and that the cause of rheumatism was "exposure in swampy region."

It was "so wet I have kept house or remained in tent most of day. Several new cases of ague & fever." When the storm abated and the river subsided the 3rd Division received orders "to turn over everything of baggage, desks, valises &c &c to prepare for active campaign. Will do as soon as QM ready to receive them. As usual well supplied with rations. But few sick. Fever the prevailing trouble. My work not heavy." The division was the left wing of the army, and as it began to advance over "awful roads" it made a weary march guarding the train through swamps. In a minor battle it lost two killed and several wounded. Trowbridge said they "lived finely on half rations of hard bread & meat. Health of troops will improve as we obtain vegetables &c." Later he wrote: "Our foragers find plenty of substantials, returning

loaded down with meal, flour, Bacon, each being in great abundance so plenty soldiers use aught but shoulders or hams; live well, you will say so we do & who has better right so long as country affords it & we can capture it as we advance." Several times Trowbridge reported that foragers had been killed in retaliation.

On January 17 the division was 25 miles into South Carolina, "a more healthy location." Trowbridge said: "Our troops will run wild now; everything will be in danger for the holy hatred toward S.C. is fully aroused." The next day he wrote about "the ruthless barbarians [who] are desolating the fair and chaste home of the lovely South." On January 31 a fine house in Robertsville was reduced to ashes, so Trowbridge said. On February 3 the division was in cotton growing country, and it burned all the cotton it found. The same day and the next Trowbridge described destruction of more mansions. "You would be surprised to see the amount of provisions &c our soldiers find in the swamps and buried in the ground." On February 7, 8 and 9 the division tore up 40 miles of the Augusta and Charleston Railroad, and the "Great granery [was] completely cut off from the Reb army." Trowbridge did not say so, but destruction of the railroad also prevented shipment of arms from the large Augusta arsenal to the Confederate armies.

On February 16 the 3rd Division was a short distance west of Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, and it was waiting for a pontoon bridge to be constructed. After the division crossed the river it remained outside Columbia. On the 17th Trowbridge recorded that the southwest wind continued. That night flames driven by the wind consumed the city.<sup>36</sup> Trowbridge did not pass through the city, "but much to our satisfaction the city has been burned."

When the army crossed the next border Sherman issued orders to spare the people and property of North Carolina, but destruction continued. The 3rd Division passed through a turpentine plantation near Sneedsville, just over the border, and Trowbridge inspected and described the turpentine distillery. When the distillery was set afire turpentine burning on the water recalled Milton's description of the "lower regions" to Trowbridge. There was not so much smoke in the air of North as of South Carolina, but Trowbridge found "some troubled with redness of eyes. Caused by Smoke or whiskey according to rank which controls military."

#### BATTLES AT AVERYSBORO

On March 14 Trowbridge wrote: "The health of the Army is very good; no pestilence among us. A few small pox cases which are rapidly recover-



ing. We have kept our sick and wounded with us; rough when bad roads but best we can do." So far there had been no serious fighting, but on March 19 Trowbridge wrote, "We have passed through two bloody battles one on the 16th and another on the 19th but we were victorious & rejoice that the Lord is on our side." On the 16th the 1st and 3rd Division of the XX Army Corps had encountered the train of the Rebel army commanded by Generals Johnston and Hardee. The Rebels charged.

I was with the ambulance train & close up to the front as we did not expect a battle & when our advance began to give way it looked very like a rout & as if the wounded in train were to fall into reb hands; but when the XX AC came up to support the 14th the onset of reb fury was checked & their shattered columns compelled to retire. Their loss must have been much greater than ours for we buried more of their dead by far than we had killed & then they were the charging party.

Trowbridge continued his letter at night on March 16:

19th lost in killed a Cap. & Lieut., and 3 I believe enlisted men besides several severely wounded. Have been very busy all day with wounded & now only have an hour or so as am on duty from 12 to 4 [AM]. I am sheltered up garret in a fine plantation residence, we converted into Hosp. building. People are all from home left bedding &c very convenient for us and assure you we use what we want. Twould be pleasant were it not the cries & groans of the wounded and dying so great as to disturb sleep. Think most of our men have been cared for or will be ere morn. Could have wished better means of conveyance to Gen. Hosp. for wounded than have yet we hope to make all comfortable.

After a march of five miles to the Cape Fear River he wrote on the 17th:

At midnight was at post serving the wounded, relieving of offending members. Wounded quite comfortable. those who have been cared for complain very little. Worked on till 7 AM when reported to Regt. which was under marching orders for Rebs retired during night. Crossed field of strife where lay stiff in death the horse and his rider. As moved found a Reb left in ambulance at roadside to die some 20-30 others left in Averysboro for want of transportation. Our forces parole them & permit them to return home. Loss to 19th Mich 4 killed & 16 wounded. 85 Ind. had 4 killed & 2 wounded. Some 200 in division hosp. so you see we have had a show of war when we take into account the rebs which were nearly equal to union wound.

Later that evening he wrote: "Evening in camp in Averysboro, much to our satisfaction as we have the opportunity of resting. Was going to work on rebs but as most have been cared for will forego the pleasure of night work. Understand our wounded have started for Goldsboro expecting to reach there in 2 days."

The next day there was a cavalry skirmish, and "Wounded rebs of 16th were left for their own people to care for." Then on the 19th Trowbridge wrote from the 3rd Division Hospital in Goldsboro at 3 AM after another bloody battle:

I assure you it was sublime & terrible. Repeatedly the rebs charged but were repulsed every time after a slight panic some regiments 14 AC which stood the brunt of battle. the 1st Div XX AC was engaged & lost heavily so [did] the 3rd Brig of 3 Div XX AC Over the wounded we worked till the small hours began to come when we concluded we had done fair Sunday's work & adjourned. The wounded are being removed rapidly as possible. Tis tedious for some of the bad cases to be transported so far in ambulance & army wagons but tis all cheerfully borne. I have worked in Hosp after each engagement & must say never saw wounded so cheerful as at present. Surely our wounded have no reason to complain of neglect on pt of Genl. Sherman.

He continued the next day: "AM worked in Hosp caring for the wounded & after ours were dressed went over to the 14 AC which was more sorely oppressed then the 20th. 13 & 21 Mich suffered heavily in killed and wounded. It has been a lovely day nature is springing into new life. All nature seems to rejoice, even the wounded & suffering appear to participate in the general gladness."

#### PREPARING FOR THE NEXT ENGAGEMENT

Provisions were about exhausted when Goldsboro was captured on March 21. Thereafter the army was supplied from Wilmington. Trowbridge and the others drew clothing: "change appearance of Reg for every color and style adopted during raid." On the 25th Trowbridge was ordered to serve in the 3rd Division Hospital until all the wounded could be sent north, and Dr. Hatchard of the 22nd Wisconsin looked after men in the 19th Michigan.

For the first week or so Trowbridge was busy with the wounded. He amputated a thigh, and he told how a soldier had died at night of hemorrhage. On the 29th he wrote:

Yesterday PM was very busy caring for the wounded of Dr.\*\*\*\*\*<sup>37</sup> who was on sick list or drunk don't know which as he is a man given to stimulating to excess but the work was pleasant as it enabled me to see the manner of dressing the class of wounds under his care & am convinced he does not do all that could be done for rapid healing of some cases. It becomes a sort of business this dressing wounds that a surgeon looks upon as men in other departments upon their business to dispatch as soon as possible with little trouble as possible; for tis evident a social chat game of some kind or walk about town is preferable to standing over a filthy patient suffering from a very offensive wound. Cussing everything about him who would or could labor cheerfully for such. Army practice so far as the patients are concerned is as thankless as Civil. Humanity seems about the same the world over. But so far as I am concerned enjoy what can in scientific point of view. Endure rest as a military necessity.

Sherman ordered the army cleared for action, and Trowbridge anticipated bloody work in a 30 day campaign. After April 1 he was busy sending off the wounded. He worked on an examining board, and helped to put the

wounded on hospital trains. One hundred and four men were dispatched the night of April 2, and another 100 were sent to the rear on April 9. That day Trowbridge heard the news of Lee's surrender. When the army marched toward Raleigh on April 10 "3-4 left to die as too bad to move & beyond hope of recovery." There was a little skirmishing, some cases of sunstroke and a little destruction of property. After Trowbridge entered Raleigh on April 14 he saw the statue of Washington and viewed the city from the dome of the state capitol. When he visited the Asylum for the Insane he heard there were 150 inmates, but he was not allowed inside. He was allowed inside the Asylum for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind, and he marveled about the methods of instruction. "'Tis surprising to see how rapidly the blind can read raised type.'" There were rumors of Johnston's surrender. Terms were made on the 19th, and the same day Trowbridge heard of Lincoln's assassination.

#### TO WASHINGTON

On April 23 Generals Grant, Meade, and Ord were present at a review in Raleigh. Trowbridge wrote: "You will see a notice in northern papers of our 'grand reviews' concerning which the soldiers cuss so much making them extra work in cleaning guns & accoutrements & resulting in little or no real good." The army also grumbled that it had to march to Washington instead of being carried by train. Rations were short on the march, forage was poor, and a bushel of potatoes cost a dollar. The army camped near Arlington, a half mile from the Potomac. On May 22 Trowbridge wrote: "Review at Washington Wednesday hope to be present with command. We chafe not a little under present orders for review & pay considering them insults to the soldiers of Sherman's army; but in military reason is the exception not the rule." On May 23 the army was ordered to be ready to march at 5 AM the next day. "Time of review & orders of march with various items connected therewith & new camp on the other side of the river have read. We march without knapsacks just guns and equipment with 2 days rations in haversacks." They stopped a few minutes on Arlington Heights and then crossed the river on the Long Bridge. Trowbridge observed, "Citizens seemed glad to see Gen Sherman's wild men of the swamps."

#### MUSTERING OUT

Trowbridge's next letter was from "Camp in woods near Ft Lincoln 4 miles from Washington City, D.C." Sherman's army was to receive eight months' pay on being mustered out. "Orders are we muster out soon as acts. balanced. Our return depends upon the activity of Officers, *field & line* but

as 6 out of 10 never had so easy & profitable a position as at present—since the fighting is over there will be no great hurry; tis reported the pay of officers stops 15th of June which may act as stimulus to complete business as soon as possible.” Trowbridge hoped that the officers would stay sober long enough to get the paper work done. He himself was caught in a web of red tape, but when he went into the city to get a certificate of nonindebtedness he found the clerks “perfect gentlemen” though there was not enough of them.<sup>38</sup> For a while he was worried by a rumor that surgeons would be required to complete their three years’ enlistment. In that case he hoped to be appointed to a Washington hospital and have Lebbie and his daughter join him. Finally, on June 10 he was mustered out. In the meantime the commanding officer of the 2nd Brigade invited the officers to a farewell party. The next day Trowbridge had a sick headache.

#### LAST MEDICAL PROBLEMS

When he was at Fort Lincoln, Trowbridge wrote: “Sick list in Reg small as no duty. soldiers have but little occasion for taking medicines.” Nevertheless, the problem of rations remained:

How unfortunate for Western troops that they do not belong to the Potomac Army. not even the shadow of Sanitary or aught save strict army rations. have bread & damaged pork, sugar & coffee while soldiers of the P. Army draw soft bread and vegetables. Such is military. I should not blame the soldiers if complain, etc. at such unreasonable distinction or unjust treatment. how do you think the Western Army looked upon Sanitary agents & others connected with such associa. When before Atlanta were suffering for vegetables, pickles, &c but not a shadow of anything of the kind & yet cans were distributed to soldiers of P. Army similarly situated. Such items published with many others has estranged these two hosts to the degree that it takes but little to bring them to blows. Several of Potomac soldiers on duty night we came here were severely wounded & one or two killed for being authoritative in treatment of Western Army; but we all hoped to leave this part of the land for homes we trust contain warm hearts & willing hands.

Trowbridge’s sister Julia had been in Washington for the last three years working in the office of the Sanitary Commission. When he looked for her she was not at home. But he “got some Sanitary stores & sent to Reg after which called again & found said Sister & will not have to guess that I had a good visit; but Julia has changed very much since she has been in service. She says the experience of the past 3 years has satisfied her that all is not what it seems. Think it has been a good school & guess lesson well learned.” His next few letters were written on U. S. Sanitary Commission letterheads.

Through Julia’s good offices a woman Sanitary Commission agent, a Mrs. Johnson from Michigan, “not the President’s wife,” was assigned to the

XX Army Corps, and more Sanitary Commission supplies were distributed to Trowbridge's men.

On the evening of June 8 Trowbridge wrote: "3rd Div. Hospital closed up today sending sick to city & not admit more." In February his wife had written to him: "Phoebe Norton told Gertie to tell me that a young man from the 19th Mich told her that Dr. Trowbridge is almost idolized in the Regt."

#### GOING HOME

Trowbridge still had to be paid and to get home. On June 12 the 19th Michigan entrained at 8 P.M. for Baltimore after waiting 12 hours at the depot. When he arrived in Baltimore, Trowbridge walked through the city by moonlight, and he paid \$1.25 for breakfast at the Eutaw House, "a first class house where soliders are swindled." The regiment passed through Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, changed cars at Marysville, and after an all-night ride was fed in the "smoky, dirty city of Pittsburgh." The next day Trowbridge found a good breakfast when he reached Cleveland at dawn. When the regiment reached Detroit it was ready to mutiny. The Paymaster arrived on June 20, "but behold the whole machinery stops because the funds are in on thousand dollar bills too large for use & failed to obtain smaller money in the city." The Paymaster sent to Indianapolis for smaller bills, and in the meantime Trowbridge had his picture taken. He priced some medical instruments, but was shocked by their low quality and high price. He would write to New York to have a case of instruments made up. By June 22 a hundred soldiers had started home without being paid. The next day Trowbridge visited a machine shop and then wrote he would be paid the next day. That ends the letters.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Trowbridge's military record in the National Archives says simply that he was "Present" in the 19th Michigan the months of September and October 1863. On October 7, 1864 Trowbridge wrote that he left home a year ago that day. He was mustered in October 16, 1863 and mustered out June 10, 1864.
2. I am grateful to Galen Wilson, Curator of Manuscripts in the Clements Library of The University of Michigan for calling my attention to the Trowbridge letters and for facilitating my study of them.
3. I am grateful to Ruth L. Collins, Registrar of Kalamazoo College, for sending me information about Trowbridge and his wife.
4. Information about membership in the regiment is drawn from *Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 1861-1865*, vol. 19, *Record Nineteenth Michigan Infantry*. Lansing, MI, Adjutant General's Office, n.d.
5. For the University of Michigan's Department of Medicine and Surgery in Trowbridge's time, see Davenport, H.W.: *Physiology 1850-1923; The View*

- from Michigan. Bethesda, MD, American Physiological Society, 1982.
6. Trowbridge's thesis is in the Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley Historical Library. Twenty-nine pages long, it appears not to be in his handwriting. John William Draper's book is *Human Physiology*. New York, Harper, 1858.
  7. There is a brief sketch of Bennitt's career in Waite, F.C.: *Centennial History of the School of Medicine, Western Reserve University*. Cleveland, Western Reserve University Press, 1946, pp. 468-70. Trowbridge's letters repeatedly demonstrate that he wanted to have nothing to do with Bennitt after the war.
  8. An obituary notice attributes Trowbridge's relatively early death to disease contracted in the service. There is no evidence of such disease in the letters.
  9. "Duties of a Regimental Surgeon" and "Duties of an Assistant Surgeon" are in Chapter XIV, Part III, Vol. II, of *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*, Second Issue. Washington, D.C., Govt. Print. Off., 1875, pp. 910-13.
  10. *Record of Services* (Note 4, p.3). The chapter on the 19th Infantry in *Michigan in the War* (compiled by Jno. Robertson), Michigan Adjutant General's Dept. Lansing: George, 1882, gives the total as 1,238. The official figures on deaths and wounded cannot be correct.
  11. See, for example, Coe, H.A.: *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: Combat Diaries of Union Sergeant Hamlin Alexander Coe*, Coe, D., editor. Teaneck, N.J., Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975. Coe was a Sergeant in Co. E of the 19th Michigan, and on occasion he commanded his company following death or injury of commissioned officers.
  12. Trowbridge was 5'5" tall and weighed 122 pounds. He often called himself "the little Doctor."
  13. Mortality data for amputations are given in Table CLXIX in Part III, Vol. II, of the *Medical and Surgical History*, note 11, p. 878.
- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Upper extremities          | Lower extremities         |
| Hand and fingers    2.9%   | Foot and toes       5.7%  |
| Wrist joint           10.4 | Ankle joint          25.1 |
- |          |      |            |      |
|----------|------|------------|------|
| Forearm  | 14.0 | Leg        | 33.2 |
| Elbow    | 7.8  | Knee joint | 57.5 |
| Arm      | 23.8 | Thigh      | 54.2 |
| Shoulder | 29.1 | Hip joint  | 83.3 |
14. See *Vaccination in Armies*. In: *Military Medical and Surgical Essays Prepared for the United States Sanitary Commission*, Hammond, W.A., editor. Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1864, Chap. IV. These are essays prepared for the instruction of poorly trained physicians. Trowbridge recorded picking up some in Atlanta.
  15. Contents of the panniers are listed on page 130 of Brooks, S.: *Civil War Medicine*. Springfield, IL, Thomas, 1966. The supplies carried in the Autenrieth Medicine Wagon are listed on page 131.
  16. The Autenrieth Medicine Wagon is illustrated in Duncan, L.C.: *The Medical Department of the United States Army in the Civil War*; When Sherman marched down to the sea. *Milit. Surg.* 31:119-50, 1912. Other medical details in this section are copied from Duncan.
  17. Palmer, A.B.: *A Treatise on the Science and Practice of Medicine*, 2 vols. New York, P. Putnam's Sons, 1883.
  18. Student notebooks containing notes on Palmer's lectures are in The Michigan Historical Collections, The Bentley Historical Library.
  19. Wunderlich's book was published in 1868. A thermometer does not appear in the list of medical and surgical supplies available to Trowbridge.
  20. Cunningham, H.H.: *Doctors in Grey*. Baton Rouge, LA, Louisiana State University Press, 1958.
  21. Cunningham, op. cit., note 20, pp. 206-08.
  22. Sherman, W.T.: *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman, by Himself*, 2 vols. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1957, II, 391.
  23. Ibid, note 22, p. 391.
  24. Stillé, C.J.: *The United States Sanitary Commission*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1863, p. 53.
  25. *The Diary of George Templeton Strong*, Nevis, A. and Thomas, M.H., editors, 4 vols. New York, Macmillan, 1952, Vol. III, *The Civil War, passim*. See Maxwell, W.O.: *Lincoln's Fifth Wheel*.

- New York, Longmans, Green, 1956, for a history of the U.S. Sanitary Commission.
26. *Documents of the U.S. Sanitary Commission*. New York, 1866, Vol. II, Document 80, appendix.
  27. This paragraph paraphrases further "Duties of a Regimental Surgeon," cited in note 9.
  28. Marcus Daniels of Co. D, 19th Michigan never rejoined the regiment. He was admitted to the Harper Hospital, Detroit, December 1, 1864, and discharged in Detroit May 20, 1865. Lebbie Trowbridge sent her husband news of Daniels when he was convalescing in western Michigan.
  29. See Cunningham, op. cit., Note 20, p. 234. The book contains much information about Jones's important work in the Confederate medical service. See also Breeden, J.O.: A medical history of the later stages of the Atlanta campaign. *J. Southern Hist.* 35:31-59, 1969, for both the Southern side of Trowbridge's experience and more information on Jones and his career.
  30. King, J.E.: Shoulder straps for Aesculapius. *Milit. Med.* 114:296-306, 1964.
  31. See Smith, D.C.: The rise and fall of typhomalarial fever, *J. Hist. Med.* 37:182-220, 287-321, 1982.
  32. Sergeant Coe was sent to the rear from Atlanta on October 22, and he spent many months in the Nashville hospital. See reference in note 14.
  33. Data are in Sherman, op. cit., Note 22, pp. 173-76.
  34. Data are in Sherman, op. cit., Note 22, pp. 134-35.
  35. Sherman, op. cit., Note 22, p. 391.
  36. See Lucas, M.B.: *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*. College Station, TX, Texas A. & M. University Press, 1976. Lucas concludes that Sherman and his troops were not really responsible for the conflagration.
  37. This doctor, named by Trowbridge, is the same one Trowbridge earlier reported drunk.
  38. Trowbridge's application to be mustered out, dated May 31, 1865, was disapproved on June 1st, because it had not been presented to the proper Commissioner of Musters. The application was forwarded by General Slocum on June 2nd and again returned on June 8th. Trowbridge was mustered out along with all the rest in his regiment on June 10th. He wanted to keep the colt he had been assigned in Savannah, but when he found he would have to pay for it he gave up the idea.